

Tuesday, April 10, 1990

Phone company replaces models to combat drugs

ST. PAUL, Minn. (AP) — A telephone company is taking a technological leap backward in an effort to fight the drug problem.

U.S. West has replaced push-button pay phones with rotary models at about 18 Twin Cities locations to make it harder for drug dealers to conduct business with telephone pagers, U.S. West spokesman Mike Breda said.

Because most pagers don't work unless the call comes from a push-button phone, drug dealers with pagers can't use the rotary phones.

Pagers have become a way of life for dealers, who often fear their telephone lines are tapped.

"Everybody's got them," Lt. James Singer of the St. Paul police narcotics unit said of the pagers.

Customers order drugs by telephoning a dealer's pager and then punching in a phone number or a pre-arranged code, police say. The dealer responds by calling back or showing up with the drugs.

In the past, Minneapolis and St. Paul police regularly asked the telephone company to remove pay phones in drug-infested areas or to adjust the phones so they don't accept incoming calls. But removing public phones can hurt people who can't afford private telephones.

"We have noticed a decrease in traffic in at least a couple of locations where we changed the phones," said Minneapolis Council member Jackie Cherryhomes.

Protest commemorates assault by Soviet soldiers

Attack fueled Georgian independence movement

TBILISI, U.S.S.R. (AP) — Thousands of Georgians chanting "Occupiers! Occupiers!" rallied outside a Soviet military base Monday, capping a day of protests recalling a bloody clash that sparked their republic's independence movement.

The day of commemorations drew almost 200,000 people to three separate rallies. It served as a show of strength by independence activists who have scored several major victories in the past month.

Soldiers assaulted a peaceful pro-independence protest in front of government buildings in Tbilisi on April 9, 1989, with shovels and gas. Nineteen people died.

The attack unleashed bitter criticism across the country. Several investigations have placed the blame for ordering the attack as high as the Communist Party Politburo. But no one has been blamed officially.

Protesters near the Caucasus Military District headquarters posted signs reading, "Get out of Georgia!" and depicting a hooded executioner wearing a military star and holding a bloody shovel.

Early Monday morning, about 100,000 people gathered in candlelight on Rustaveli Boulevard, the site of the clash. About 70,000 more nearly filled the republic's main stadium Monday evening in a similar rally.

At an intersection outside the walled military base, about 10,000 people gathered in the afternoon and shouted through megaphones for the soldiers to abandon their posts.

There was no visible reaction from the few soldiers seen on the base. Authorities did not interfere with the protest, and Georgian policeman helped keep order.

Protests in other Soviet republics have included anti-military elements, among them calls to boycott the draft, but Monday's demonstration was one of the largest directed specifically against the Soviet military.

Top Soviet generals have complained in recent months about a growing "campaign to discredit" the army, particularly in republics with rising independence movements.

In the Baltic republics, this spring's military call-up is expected to bring large numbers of draft dodgers, and Georgians said they expect the same.

Georgia is not the only republic with a strong inde-

pendence movement. The Baltic republics of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia; Moldavia; and the neighboring Caucasus republics of Azerbaijan and Armenia also have strong independence movements.

Lithuania is the strongest — it declared itself independent from the Soviet Union on March 11, and the standoff with the Kremlin continues. In Moscow on Monday, Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev and his top advisory body said new economic and political steps would be taken to break Lithuanian intransigence. No details were given.

The leader of Latvia's Supreme Soviet said Monday he is certain Latvian legislators also will vote to secede from the Soviet Union when they meet next month, but that the independence process will be gradual.

Zviad Gamsakhurdia, an independence activist long considered the dean of Georgian dissidence, told reporters Sunday the April 9 anniversary was a "day of great sorrow, but also a day of victory" for Georgians.

He said only a small percentage of Georgians favored independence before the clash last April 9, but that now the vast majority favor independence from Moscow.

On March 9, the Georgian Supreme Soviet, or parliament, condemned what it said was the republic's forced annexation to the Soviet Union and demanded negotiations on restoring independence. Later the same month, lawmakers put off local elections to give opponents to the Communists a chance to organize.

At Monday's protest, speakers urged parents to help their children evade the draft. The protest ended with a mass recitation of the Lord's Prayer.

Most of the rally focused on hard-core politics. Gamsakhurdia read a list of 23 demands to the Soviet government. They included cancellation of military service for Georgians, declaration that the April 9 clash was "genocide against the Georgian people" and punishment of those responsible.

Gorbachev offered his condolences to Georgia on Sunday, but independence activists dismissed them as empty words.

Greyhound files suit against union officers

WASHINGTON (AP) — Greyhound Lines filed a \$30 million civil suit Monday against union officers for allegedly organizing violence in the 5-week-old drivers' strike, but the union dismissed the move as a ploy to keep bargaining talks stalled.

In a suit filed in U.S. District Court in Jacksonville, Fla., Greyhound claimed unlawful actions by the Amalgamated Transit Union and said 20 union officers have cost the company at least \$10 million.

The strike has been marked by shootings, bomb threats and other incidents. The company has said it won't resume negotiations until a week goes by without an act of violence.

The suit accused the union of violating provisions of the federal Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act and Florida state law.

Greyhound Vice President Anthony P. Lannie, who announced the suit in Washington, maintained that several specific offenses showed a pattern of racketeering activity, including extortion, attempted murder, obstruction of justice, interference with interstate commerce and arson.

He charged that, through violent activities, union officials were attempting to "win an inflated financial settlement they could never achieve through lawful, collective bargaining. There is a word for that — extortion."

Union officers allegedly assigned rank-and-file members violent tasks and then paid them

from the union's strike defense fund, the suit contended.

"That's false and ridiculous," said Fred Ingram, president of Local 1493 in Charlotte, N.C.,

"Their whole plan from the beginning has been to get rid of the union."

— Fred Ingram, Union Local 1493 president

and one of two local presidents the union has asked the court to replace with a receiver. "We have never ordered anybody to do anything. I don't know where that's coming from."

Strikers are paid \$50 a week in strike benefits for manning picket lines, Ingram said, charging that the company had filed the suit to divert attention from its refusal to resume contract negotiations.

"Their whole plan from the beginning has been to get rid of the union," he said.

Nick Nichols, a spokesman for the Amalgamated Council of Greyhound Local Unions, said the union supports prosecution of anyone responsible for strike-related violence.

"We have consistently asked this company to present its evidence," Nichols said. "We know that there is no evidence. They've simply pointed the finger of blame at employees and used the issue as a smoke screen for not resuming negotiations," he said.

He noted that no government agency has filed criminal charges against union officers.

"Anyone can hire a lawyer and submit some documents to the court," Nichols said of the company's suit.

Lannie said the company had no immediate plans to resume negotiations.

"We're still waiting for a seven-day cease-fire," Lannie said, noting that an Arrow Trailways bus was struck by two bullets near Fort Worth Sunday night. No one was injured on the bus, which is not owned by Greyhound but was scheduled to pick up Greyhound passengers in Dallas, Lannie said.

Talks between the company and the union have been stalled since March 18. There have been about 30 shootings and more than 100 bomb threats, the company said. The union contends there have been more than 60 incidents of violence against striking drivers. One striker was crushed to death by a bus in Redding, Calif., on March 3.

Communist era in Hungary draws to close

Voters give strong mandate to leading conservative party

BUDAPEST, Hungary (AP) — Voters ended the Communist era by giving a strong mandate to the country's main conservative party in what could be the genesis of a center-right trend among Soviet bloc countries emerging into democracy.

The Hungarian Democratic Forum campaigned on an anti-Communist platform that incorporated universal conservative values as well as a strong dose of nationalism. It scored an impressive victory in parliamentary elections that wrapped up Sunday.

It was the second win in two Soviet bloc elections for conservative forces. In East Germany's March 18 vote, conservatives fell just short of a majority in the first free national elections in any Warsaw Pact country. As in Hungary, remnants of the long-ruling Communists were relegated to a relatively minor opposition role.

Hungary's Democratic Forum captured 165 of the 386 seats at stake Sunday. In the first round of balloting March 25, they won 42.75 percent of the vote.

Despite preliminary predictions of a close race, the Forum left the liberal League of Free Democrats far behind, with 92 seats and 23.83 percent of the vote, forcing the rival party to bury any aspirations of sharing a government role.

The ruling Socialists, created by reform Communists last October, were sent packing. Despite their commitment to political pluralism, they captured only 33 seats or 8.55 percent of the vote, victims of widespread sentiment that they were the heirs of decades of repressive Communist rule.

Its strong position left the Democratic Forum independent of any party with which it had major differences. Instead, it gained the leeway to negotiate a coalition it could dominate with the agrarian Smallholders and Christian Democrats, which share many of its conservative views.

Conservatives in other East European countries preparing for the first free elections in more than four decades clearly hope that the same anti-Communist back-

lash that worked in favor of kindred parties in East Germany and Hungary will also give them an edge.

In Czechoslovakia, where voters go to the polls June 8, the hope of victory has resulted in the Christian Democrats in Slovakia forging an alliance with Czech center-rightists, despite a general drifting apart of the two constituent republics. Only the conservatives have managed to formally coordinate their election strategies nationwide.

The Slovak Christian Democrats, led by Czechoslovak Deputy Premier Jan Carnogursky, are expected to win up to 60 percent of the vote in their traditionally Catholic republic, and the well-organized alliance is likely to finish strong overall in the country, although no one can predict how strong.

The election picture is confusing in Romania, where about 70 political parties have sprung up or been revived in the wake of the December revolution that ended the dictatorship of Nicolae Ceausescu.

But the nation's strongest conservative force, the 700,000-member National Peasants' Party, is given the best chance of defeating the National Salvation Front, which took control of the country in the chaos of the revolution but was later forced to share power. It is suspected by many conservatives of harboring unrepentant Communists.

The Peasants' hand has been strengthened by an election alliance with the Liberals and Social Democrats — the two other leading parties. The alliance mandates cooperation up to the May 20 election, in an effort to defeat the National Salvation Front.

In Bulgaria, the two traditional agrarian parties could pose the biggest threat to the still-powerful Communist Party, but only if they manage to bury differences ahead of election day June 10. Negotiations on unification of the two parties continue.

Study: South's environment least protected

DURHAM, N.C. (AP) — The South's environmental health is both less protected and worse than that of any other region, according to a study released Monday by the Institute for Southern Studies.

"The South ... has become the nation's biggest waste dump," said Bob Hall, research director for non-profit research group based in Durham. "The numbers show the region also has a disproportionate share of hazardous jobs, contaminated water, homes lacking complete plumbing and industries spewing cancer-causing chemicals into the air."

Figures from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency indicate that two-thirds of the nation's hazardous waste was treated, incinerated, buried in landfills or otherwise disposed in the 13-state region. The region includes Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia.

Georgia, West Virginia, Virginia and Louisiana hosted 6,500 to 12,500 pounds of such waste per person, compared with a national average of 2,000 pounds. The average in the South is 4,300 pounds per person. Texas averaged 5,055 pounds of such waste per person, ranking 44th.



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